



Proposal to the America's Great Outdoors (AGO) group concerning the Montana, Multi-Agency Integrated Restoration Strategy (MAIRS) Group

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The Montana, Multi-Agency Integrated Restoration Strategy (MAIRS) assessments and working relationships were formed to address all lands management of resources. This proposal to the America's Great Outdoors (AGO) group is that the MAIRS be examined to see if the existing group could be used as a vehicle to help identify important priority restoration and conservation locations and actions that the AGO would like to be addressed, and that will complement efforts across ownership boundaries in the State of Montana.

One of the challenges to be overcome is recognizing the very different planning cycles and timeframes that different organizations have, and to be able to coordinate and sequence treatment proposals. The ultimate goal here is to produce actions on the ground, tiered to broader scale integrated assessment processes by member agencies and organizations, which will implement complementary restoration and conservation actions to develop more resilient forests, grasslands, and aquatic systems in Montana.

The first step would be to convene a workshop of MAIRS and interested AGO representatives to review MAIRS related assessments and implementation plans, and assess the opportunity to broaden the group to other organizations. Then, if MAIRS and AGO do see benefits to a collaborative integrated effort, bring forward a detailed implementation framework that agency and organizational leadership can commit to in their various planning processes across the state. The objective would be to assist local landowners and land management agencies to develop and implement complimentary on the ground restoration and conservation projects that will restore or maintain the resiliency of forest, grassland, and aquatic resources across ownership boundaries.

In 2005, MAIRS was formed to address the restoration to more resilient forest and watershed conditions across the State of Montana. Rob Ethridge from Montana DNRC, has been the informal chairperson for the group. MAIRS is currently made up of BLM, USDA FS R1, NRCS, USF&WS, Montana DNRC, Montana FW&P, and Montana DEQ.

This group shares some common goals and objectives and have experienced the development of independent broad-scale assessments by member groups in Montana. One of the objectives of this group is to continue to integrate the various assessment findings and focus on locating areas of high priority opportunities for common treatment locations across land ownership boundaries in the state by identifying priority landscape opportunity areas. Following that has been the step of engaging local managers and landowners in various regions of the state to develop restoration projects to produce more resilient forest and watershed conditions that can complement actions across ownership boundaries.

The integration of various GIS decision support efforts have information helpful to identification of priority opportunity areas for active restoration and conservation of the many resources these organizations manage. These include:

- The Region One Forest Service Integrated Restoration and Protection Strategy (IRPS),
http://www.fs.usda.gov/wps/portal/fsinternet!/ut/p/c4/04_SB8K8xLLM9MSSzPy8xBz9CP0os3giAwhwtDDw9_Al8zPyhQoY6BdkOyoCAGixyPg!/?ss=1101&navtype=BROWSEBYSUBJECT&cid=stelprdb5314726&navid=1601200000000000&pnavid=1600000000000000&position=Not Yet Determined.Html&ttype=detail&pname=Region 1- Resource Management,
- The MT DNRC State Assessment (SA) and Resource Strategy (RS)
www.Dnrc.mt.gov/forestry/assistance/sars.asp,
- The Montana Fish Wildlife and Parks Critical Areas Planning System
- The recent and developing BLM Middle Rockies Ecoregion Assessment, and USF&WS LCC